

# Washington

## The Story Behind the Cuban Statement

By JAMES RESTON

WASHINGTON, April 4—When the Kennedy Administration publicly denounces the Cuban Government as a "Soviet satellite" which confronts the Western Hemisphere with a "grave and urgent challenge," it is obvious that the Cuban crisis is entering a new and critical phase.

President Kennedy, who approved the State Department's White Paper on Cuba after consultation with Secretary of State Rusk and the head of the Central Intelligence Agency, Allen Dulles, has heretofore avoided language of this sort.

His public statements on Laos, for example, have dropped the hostile and quarrelsome language of the Cold War, but the tone of the Cuban statement is sharp and even ominous, and this difference is not at all accidental.

The use of the words "grave and urgent challenge" reflects a little-known fact. This is that the Administration has reason to believe that there are now between 100 and 200 Cuban airmen in Czechoslovakia being trained to fly Soviet MIG fighters. So far as is known here, there are as yet no MIG fighters actually in Cuba, though it is not ruled out that some may be there in crates as part of the 30,000 tons of Communist arms which U. S. sources say have been shipped to Cuba in the last nine months.

In any event, it is widely believed in official quarters here that if this training program continues behind the Iron Curtain—there are 2,700 Cuban technicians of every sort now being trained in Communist countries—the military balance of power in the Caribbean will be such within six months that only a major invasion of Cuba by Western Hemisphere forces, including the United States, could hope to deal with the military situation.

The Kennedy Administration does not wish to see such a situation develop. It has no desire to land marines in Cuba and open up the old cries of Yankee imperialism, especially when it is involved in a major effort to discipline the Communists from engaging in military operations in South Asia, Africa and elsewhere.

Accordingly, the State Department's Cuban declaration had three objectives. It wished to make clear before the forthcoming debate in the U. S. that U. S. policy is not

opposed to the social revolution in Cuba but to the betrayal of that revolution by Dr. Castro. It wanted to urge the other Latin-American nations to be realistic about Castro's "fateful challenge to the inter-American system." And it wanted to give hope to the anti-Castro forces within Cuba and those training in this country and in Guatemala that the United States would support any genuine democratic government established in Cuba.

This Administration is not acting on the assumption that the Soviet Union wants to establish a missile or military base in Cuba. Any such attempt would undoubtedly be met directly with military intervention by the United States.

What is afoot is an effort to establish a Communist political base, backed with enough force to exploit the weakness of other governments throughout the Caribbean and Central America and create a serious political diversion for the United States in the Western Hemisphere.

It can be taken for granted that while the Kennedy Administration does not want to intervene with its own troops in Cuba, it does not intend to stand aside and watch a situation develop which would force such intervention.

Kennedy made this clear enough during the Presidential campaign. "We must," he said on Oct. 30 in New York, "attempt to strengthen the non-Batista democratic anti-Castro forces in exile and in Cuba itself who offer eventual hope of overthrowing Castro."

Castro is well aware of the fact that these forces are being trained in this country and in Guatemala. As a matter of fact, the Cuban radio is daily charging the Central Intelligence Agency with financing and directing invasion units.

Thus a serious situation is developing which this Government does not want but cannot avoid. The President would no doubt prefer to let time take care of Castro, especially since there are so many other problems piling up on the White House desk, but the training of a Cuban air force behind the Iron Curtain and the prospect of finding Soviet MIGs over the Caribbean inevitably force the Administration to make an urgent review of the whole problem.

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